

YOUR COMMUNITY AND SARA TITLE III



Other sections cover what to do about reporting chemicals that are considered trade secrets (Section 322), penalties for non-compliance (Section 325), and how the public can access the information gathered under SARA Title III.

A SUMMARY OF SARA TITLE III

Sections 301-303 of the act establish state emergency planning and community right-to-know commissions and Local Emergency Planning Committees. Membership requirements for each body are identified. Requirements for those facilities that must have a plan and what should be in those plans are specified.

Section 304 covers accidental releases of certain chemicals and specifies who a facility should contact if there is a release. The SERC and the LEPC must be notified as well as the National Response Center (NRC).

Sections 311-312 require facilities to submit a Material Safety Data Sheet (MSDS) or a list of any Extremely Hazardous Substances (EHS) at their site at or above certain levels. Reporting must be done to the state, the LEPC, and the local fire department.

Section 313 specifies that certain facilities report non-emergency emissions of certain chemicals if those emissions are over a federally mandated limit.

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HAZARDOUS MATERIALS EMERGENCY PLANNING IN YOUR COMMUNITY

Future Solutions Now

HAZARDOUS MATERIALS EMERGENCY PLANNING IN YOUR COMMUNITY

Remember the tragic hazardous materials incident in Bhopal, India in 1984? This incident caused hundreds of deaths and injuries from a leak of poisonous gas. Many of those who died or were injured lived close to the plant where the leak occurred, but had little or no knowledge of the danger there. The Emergency Planning and Community Right-to-Know Act of 1986, also known as the Superfund Amendments and Reauthorization Act (SARA), was passed by Congress after the Bhopal incident. Title III of the SARA law is intended to reduce the chance of a similar chemical accident happening in the U.S., no matter how large or small it might be.



Title III

Title III identifies what facilities, the state, and local communities must do in order to protect the public from hazardous chemical accidents. These mandates include:

- Requiring that facilities with supplies of certain Extremely Hazardous Substances report what they have to the state, their local fire department, and a Local Emergency Planning Committee (LEPC)
- Establishing the Michigan Emergency Planning and Community Right-to-Know Commission (sometimes known as the State Emergency Response Commission - SERC)
- Establishing LEPCs under the direction of the SERC

WHAT IT MEANS TO YOU

The Michigan Emergency Planning and Community Right-to-Know Commission has appointed LEPCs throughout the state. Presently, Michigan has about 90 LEPCs. The main task of the LEPC is to develop response plans for accidental spills or releases of Extremely Hazardous Substances that threaten the community. In addition, the LEPC must keep information on hand about each site that manufactures, uses, or stores certain quantities of Extremely Hazardous Substances. This information must be made available to the public.

LEP Cs have an important role in protecting both their communities and emergency responders if a chemical release emergency happens. Members come from a variety of backgrounds in their communities and bring different points of view to the planning table. This improves the completeness of each response plan and involves the community in the planning process.

LEPCs include members from the following groups:

- Elected Officials
- Police
- Fire
- Emergency Management
- Public Health
- Environmental Health
- Hospitals
- Transportation
- Regulated Facilities
- Community Groups
- Media
- Education
- Agriculture

Once plans are developed, they provide the community members with basic information about chemical hazards in their area and what will be done about those hazards in the event of an accident.

***For more information, contact your Local
Emergency Planning Committee or the
Michigan State Police
Emergency Management Division
Hazardous Materials Planning Unit
517-336-2042***